



State of Connecticut  
SENATE  
SENATOR DANTE BARTOLOMEO  
*Thirteenth District*

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 485  
Committee on Transportation Public Hearing  
February 9, 2015

Chairman Maynard, Chairman Guerrero, and members of the Transportation Committee:

I regret that I am unable to testify in person, but I want to thank you for providing the opportunity for public input on my proposed legislation, SB 485, An Act Concerning the Fee for the American Flag Symbol on Veterans' Driver's Licenses.

This bill intends to provide the honorable men and women of the Armed Forces with a small token of appreciation for their dedication and service to both our state and our country.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs previously supplied all veterans with identification cards denoting their previous military service, but has discontinued that practice for veterans not currently receiving federal benefits from the VA. As a result, many veterans no longer have access to a complimentary compact identification card that they can carry as proof of their credentials, and afford them the benefits for which they are eligible.

The State of Connecticut does allow for a complimentary veteran's symbol, but only when it is requested on the initial application for a new license or with a renewal application for a license approaching its expiration date. Should a veteran need or want the flag symbol added to his or her driver's license at some point within the standard six-year license renewal period, the state requires payment of a \$30 fee.

I strongly believe that our veterans should incur no fee when requesting that their driver's license be outfitted with a symbol of service, even if their request is made between renewal dates. Although not addressed in my original proposal, I would request that language be added to specify that this benefit, whether for driver's licenses or non-driver identification cards, would be available only to honorably and medically discharged veterans.

I thank you for your consideration and urge you to report favorably on Proposed SB 485.